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ABSTRACT

In the 1940's and 1950's, the goal of the schools was equal opportunity for all. Now the goal is to maximize the potential of each child through individualized instruction. As a result, standardized tests and measures lacking in prescriptive information on students are falling into disfavor. The three principal past uses of evaluation--placement, research, and counseling--will be joined by evaluation that facilitates instruction, curricular management, and resource allocation. Teachers will need item analyses of an individual's performance on achievement tests to explore areas of weakness. Criterion-referenced tests, new inventory tests on relevant student background, process oriented measures, modality preference tests, cognitive style instruments, and the like. Curricular management will strongly emphasize behavioral objectives, process (rather than input-output) measures, and relevancy tests. Comparison of school districts with similar inputs will emerge. Resource allocation will be strongly oriented to accountability with performance guaranteed contracts proliferating. The coming changes are exemplified by test selection committees which no longer consist mainly of counsellors, but include many teachers, curriculum experts, and administrators as well. The counseling profession is not adequately prepared to meet the schools' new information requirements and changes are necessary in pre- and in-service education. (DG)

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Summary of Presentation by Dr. Joseph Dionne
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My purpose this afternoon is to point to what I believe will become fundamental changes in measurement and evaluation in tomorrow's school, to attempt to explain why these changes are already occurring and to explore their implications for the roles of curricular workers and pupil personnel services.

Educators across the country are voicing discontent with current evaluation practices. They are particularly disenchanted with standardized test results and psychological reports. They claim that information regarding grade placement is of little use to the classroom teacher. They are equally critical of hard-to-read psychologists' reports which are descriptive when what is needed is information about how to behave towards troubled students. Just a short time ago bringing the use of standardized tests and psychological services to the school was considered enlightened practice. Then why the current discontent?

It can best be understood in an historical context. I will argue that these techniques were adequate to the task the schools faced in the forties and fifties but aren't up to the new demands being placed on the school by a change in the cultural dictates.

From the beginning American education has been offered to more and more students. Up until the forties, however, it still had as its mission the preparation of students for higher education. While maintaining its primary mission as college preparatory, the school began to offer a general curriculum as well as one that was vocational in nature. In order to protect the integrity of its academic program from whence a school gained its prestige, the system known as tracking was invented.

Tracking soon yielded to grouping as a more democratic process wherein students were grouped in courses with students of similar achievement or ability and could cross general, academic and vocational lines in planning their programs. This was the golden era of standardized testing because these were the tools by which placement decisions were often made.

The cultural dictate of this era was equal opportunity for all. The schools established mechanisms whereby any student could go on to higher education providing he met academic standards. In fact the schools operated as a filter wherein the able and the motivated made it to college. Equal opportunity simply is not a satisfactory goal for America's schools any longer. The new cultural dictate is that the school must maximize the potential of each child regardless of the background of experience or the ability he brings to the school. The schools are being asked to individualize and personalize instruction. This requirement has resulted in a new set of

decisions that must be made and demands that new forms of information be provided. School people are unhappy because the information being provided by standardized tests is not helpful in individualizing instruction. Teachers want information about students which is prescriptive in nature.

The shift in emphasis within the schools from equal opportunity to maximized potential may be explained in terms of economics. In the past schools were seen as a drain on the nation's economy, using up valuable resources that could be put into machinery, highways or plants, all of which contributed to increasing the gross national product. Economists have recently determined that the greatest investment that can be made in people is more education. As they receive more education, they make a greater contribution to the economy. This insight has brought with it a new concept which schools will be facing in the next decade. It is accountability. It asks what are you doing with our most precious resource? To what avail have increased expenditures in education been? Congressmen, state legislators, and local citizens are demanding an accounting.

What are the implications of the new cultural context in which the school finds itself for the future of evaluation? It is now clear that the three principal uses of evaluation in the past; placement, research, and counseling, will be joined by evaluation which facilitates instruction, curricular management, and resource allocation. It's imperative that pupil personnel service workers understand these emerging functions.

In the area of instruction, techniques for individualizing and personalizing instruction are needed. Curricular management implies program evaluation stressing behavioral objectives and the allocation of resources such as program, planning and budget systems.

How will the education community adjust to the new requirements:

INSTRUCTION

1. Efforts will be made to adapt existing practices, i.e. achievement testing, to provide recommendations for instruction. An item analysis of an individual's performance will yield a spring board from which the teacher can explore areas of weakness.
2. New tests of an inventory nature will appear that assess the stock of relevant experiences or images that the child brings to the task.

3. Criterion-referenced tests will be developed in all subjects, permitting the teacher to place the child on a continuum and to prescribe the next appropriate experience.
4. Measures more appropriate to the new process oriented curricula will emerge.
5. Tests which will permit the teacher to personalize instruction through knowledge of modality preference will be developed.
6. Instruments which characterize the manner in which a person best processes information, i.e. his cognitive style, will be developed. As a first effort we can expect to see a Piagetian intelligence scale developed. Being ordinal in scale rather than integral, it will characterize the child's current mode of cognitive behavior.
7. Techniques helpful in planning instruction in our two newest institutions, the pre-school and the community college, will be developed.

CURRICULAR MANAGEMENT

1. Test selection committees will begin to match the objectives of the local curriculum with items on tests as a selection procedure. Once congruence is established, an item analysis will yield information which can be used to infer needed changes in the curriculum.
2. Program evaluation stressing behavioral objectives will be the principal thrust in curricular management in the next three years.
3. Curricular workers will recognize the importance of a taxonomy of evaluation techniques and their responsibility to state all the objectives of a program and then select the most creditable means of evaluation that the current state of the art will permit.
4. The notion of legitimate alternative approaches to accomplishing objectives will replace the current polar reasoning.

5. Process measures, as contrasted with input and output measures, will be developed so that estimations of worth can be made of on-going programs.
6. Comparison of school districts with those having similar inputs will emerge.
7. Measures of relevancy of the curriculum to students and parents will be developed.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION - ADMINISTRATION

1. Present costs of programs will provide comparative information on the nature of a school district's commitment.
2. Program, planning, and budget systems will provide data by which we compare success in one program with success in another before investing resources.
3. Program, planning, and budget systems will facilitate communication with the public and legislators.
4. Performance guaranteed contracts will proliferate between publishers and school districts.
5. Management information systems for school administrators will be developed.

That these forces are already at work may be seen in the makeup of test selection committees. At one time they were populated by counselors, because of their knowledge of statistics and the use of tests in the counseling process, but today they are populated by teachers, curricular workers, administrators, and counselors.

Problems are arising because each community of interest wants the test to serve its functions. None of the committee members have been educated in the six functions of evaluation

I have attempted to explain that forces in the culture are demanding that the schools change their practices. In changing their practices, the schools have manifest new information requirements. It's also clear that the profession is not adequately prepared to meet these new demands. The implications for counselor education are many and it's important that we begin now to alter pre-service and in-service education.